

**COOPERATIVE STATE RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND EXTENSION SERVICE;
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

REGIONAL AQUACULTURE CENTER PROGRAM, SECTION 1475

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE: This program is listed in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance under 10.200.

DATES: Applications must be received by Grants.gov by close of business (COB) on **August 15, 2007** (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time). Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

PART I – FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Legislative Authority and Background

The Regional Aquaculture Center Program is authorized under U.S.C. 3322 (d). The Regional Aquaculture Centers will provide for aquacultural research, development, and demonstration projects having a national or regional application as specified in subsection (b). Five regional centers are authorized for the performance of aquacultural research, extension education, and demonstration projects. The aquaculture research, development, and demonstration centers established shall be geographically located so that they are representative of the regional aquaculture opportunities in the United States.

Five Regional Aquaculture Centers (Center) were established in 1986. The mission of the Centers is to provide strong aquaculture research and extension programs to enhance the viability, profitability, and environmental compatibility of commercial aquaculture production in the United States to benefit consumers, producers, and the American economy. The Centers are regionally located administrative centers that are part of a national effort of cooperative and collaborative research and extension programming that addresses the critical needs of the aquaculture industry.

As used here, a “Center” refers to an administrative center. Centers will facilitate administration and implementation of cooperative regional research and extension educational programs in aquaculture. Centers will serve as focal points to assess needs, establish priorities, and to implement regional research and extension educational programs in aquaculture.

The Centers provide leadership and administrative support for planning, development, implementation, and performance tracking of multi-state research and extension programs targeted at the critical needs of the industry in each region. The Centers also ensure the relevancy, quality, and performance of these programs and that research findings and technologies are delivered to end-users through strong extension educational programs. The CSREES-funded Centers, linked to the National Aquaculture Centers of the USDA Agricultural Research Service (ARS), serve as the focal points for USDA’s aquaculture research, technology, and extension programs.

Each Center consists of a Board of Directors, a Director, an Industry Advisory Council (IAC), and a Technical Committee (TC). Regional research and extension needs are identified and prioritized by the IAC, reviewed for technical feasibility by the TC, and are approved by a Board of Directors. The Center then solicits proposals addressing these critical needs. All projects funded by the Centers must address the needs of two or more states and must be effectively planned and implemented on a regional level. Multi-state proposals are developed by teams of scientists and extension specialists within the region. Each proposal contains the project outline, including goals and objectives, methodologies, budgets, budget narrative, project leaders, participating institutions, subcontracts, and time frames for completion. Proposals are submitted to the Center and reviewed by the TC and IAC. Proposals recommended for funding are then presented to the Board for final approval and inclusion in the Centers annual Plan of Work (POW).

Each year, CSREES administers the center program through directed, Congressional appropriations. CSREES solicits from each of the five Centers, a grant application to administer the center program in their respective region. A portion of the funding is used to provide administrative and staff support for program and project development. The remainder of the funding is used to support research and extension projects administered by the centers. The grant application contains the administrative and project development components of the program. The remaining funds will be used to fund regional research, education, and extension projects. Projects funded through the Center should be multi-state and multi-institutional projects and funded through subcontracts administered by the Centers. All projects funded by the centers are reviewed by CSREES prior to release of funds. Each Center submits an annual accomplishment report to CSREES. Reports include a description of progress in meeting stated regional goals and project objectives.

The five centers are currently located at the following institutions:

The University of Maryland-College Park serves as the host of the Northeastern Regional Aquaculture Center (NRAC). NRAC serves Washington, DC and the following twelve states in the Northeastern Region: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and West Virginia.

Michigan State University and Iowa State University co-host the North Central Regional Aquaculture Center (NCRAC) Program. NCRAC serves the twelve states in the North Central Region including: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

The Oceanic Institute and the University of Hawaii co-host the Center for Tropical and Subtropical Aquaculture (CTSA). CTSA administers the center program for Hawaii and the American Insular Pacific region.

Mississippi State University serves as the host for the Southern Regional Aquaculture Center (SRAC). SRAC administers aquaculture research and extension programs in thirteen states and two territories including Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, U.S. Virgin Islands,

and Virginia. The Administrative Office is located at the Delta Research and Extension Center in Stoneville, Mississippi.

The University of Washington serves as the host for the Western Regional Aquaculture Center (WRAC). WRAC administers aquaculture research and extension programs in twelve western states including Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

The RAC must have: 1) demonstrated commitment and competency in aquaculture research and extension; 2) the ability to provide broad programmatic leadership for regional research and extension activities administered by the Center; 3) demonstrated competency in grant and subcontract management; and 4) the ability and willingness to provide administrative support for the Center.

National Coordinating Council: The National Coordinating Council (NCC) is composed of Directors of the Centers and the USDA National Program Leaders for Aquaculture. The NCC provides a mechanism to enhance inter-regional cooperation and collaboration and improve linkages to other aquaculture programs across the Federal government.

B. Purpose and Priorities

Applications are being solicited for the Regional Aquaculture Center Program, Section 1475 from each of the five centers to fund priority research, education, and extension projects in their respective regions that will support the development of a globally competitive U.S. aquaculture industry to: 1) improve the efficiency of U.S. aquaculture production; 2) improve aquaculture production systems; 3) improve the sustainability and environmental compatibility of aquaculture production; 4) ensure and improve the quality, safety, and variety of aquaculture products for consumers; 5) improve the marketing of U.S. aquaculture products; and 6) improve information dissemination, technology transfer, and access to global information and technology in aquaculture.

PART II – AWARD INFORMATION

A. Available Funding

The total amount of funds available is approximately \$3.6 million for project periods up to 4 years.

B. Type of Application

Only new applications are to be submitted in response to this request for applications (RFA).

PART III – ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

In accordance with 7 U.S.C. 3322(d), grant applications are requested from institutions housing the respective Administrative Centers identified in PART I (A). Award recipients may subcontract to organizations not eligible to apply provided such organizations are necessary for the conduct of the project.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

CSREES does not require cost-share or matching support for the centers program and matching resources will not be factored into the review process.

PART IV – APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Application Package

The steps to access application materials are as follows:

1. Download and install PureEdge Viewer, a small, free program that provides access to the grant application. See http://www.grants.gov/resources/download_software.jsp#pureedge.
2. The application package must be obtained via Grants.gov, go to <http://www.grants.gov>, click on “Apply for Grants” in the left-hand column, click on “Step 1: [Download a Grant Application Package and Instructions](#),” enter the funding opportunity number USDA-CSREES-OP-000749 in the appropriate box and click “Download Package.” From the search results, click “Download” to access the application package.

Contained within the application package is the “[CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide: A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov](#).” This Guide contains an introduction and general Grants.gov instructions, information about how to use a Grant Application Package in Grants.gov, and instructions on how to complete the application forms.

If assistance is needed to access the application package (e.g., downloading or navigating PureEdge forms, using PureEdge with a Macintosh computer), refer to resources available on the Grants.gov Web site first (<http://grants.gov/>). Grants.gov assistance is also available as follows:

- Grants.gov customer support
Toll Free: 1-800-518-4726
Business Hours: M-F 7:00 am – 9 pm Eastern Standard Time
Email: support@grants.gov

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

Electronic applications should be prepared following Part V and VI of the document entitled “[A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov.](#)” This guide is part of the corresponding application package (see Section A. of this Part). The following is **additional information** needed in order to prepare an application in response to this RFA. If there is discrepancy between the two documents, the information contained in this RFA is overriding.

Note the attachment requirements (e.g., portable document format) in Part III section 3. of the Guide.

1. R&R Other Project Information Form

a. Project Summary/Abstract (Field 6. on the Form)

The summary should also include the relevance of the project to the goals of centers.

b. Project Narrative (Field 7. on the Form)

The Project Narrative shall not exceed 5,000 pages of written text and up to 5,000 additional pages for figures and tables. The Project Narrative must include all of the following:

- (1) Estimates of the magnitude of the issues and their relevance to stakeholders and to ongoing State-Federal food and agricultural research, education and extension programs;
- (2) Role of the stakeholders in problem identification, planning, and implementation and evaluation as appropriate; and
- (3) Reasons for having the work performed at the proposing institution.

a. Objectives: Clear, concise, complete, and logically arranged statement(s) of specific aims of the proposed effort must be included in all proposals.

b. Methods: The procedures or methodology to be applied to the proposed effort should be explicitly stated. This section should include but not necessarily be limited to:

- (i) A description of stakeholder involvement in problem identification, planning, implementation and evaluation;
- (ii) A description of the proposed project activities in the sequence in which it is planned to carry them out;
- (iii) Techniques to be employed, including their feasibility and rationale for their use in this project;
- (iv) Kinds of results expected;
- (v) Means by which extension and education activities will be evaluated;
- (vi) Means by which data will be analyzed or interpreted;
- (vii) Details of plans to communicate results to stakeholders and the public;
- (viii) Pitfalls that might be encountered; and
- (ix) Limitations to proposed procedures.

2. Supplemental Information Form

- a. Program Code (Field 2. on the Form). Enter the program code name (i.e., enter “**Aquaculture Centers, section 1475**”) and the program code (i.e., enter “**CA**”).
- b. Conflict of Interest List (Field 8. on the Form). A conflict of interest list is not required under this RFA. Do not complete and submit a conflict of interest list.

C. Submission Date and Time

Instructions for submitting an application are included in Part IV, Section 1.9 of the CSREES Grants.gov Application Guide.

Applications must be received by close of business on **August 15, 2007** (5:00 p.m. Eastern Time). Applications received after this deadline will normally not be considered for funding.

The receipt of all applications will be acknowledged by e-mail. Therefore, applicants are strongly encouraged to provide accurate e-mail addresses, where designated, on the SF-424 R&R Application for Federal Assistance.

If the AR has not received a confirmation message from CSREES within 30 days of submission of the application, please contact the Agency Contact identified in Part VII of the applicable RFA and request the proposal number assigned to the application.

D. Funding Restrictions

1. Indirect Costs

Pursuant to Section 1473 of the National Agricultural Research, Extension, and Teaching Policy Act of 1977, as amended, 7 U.S.C. 3319, **indirect costs and tuition remission are not allowable** and no funds will be approved for this purpose.

2. Building Construction or Renovation

Funds made available for the operation of regional centers may be used for the rehabilitation of existing buildings or facilities to house such centers, but may not be used for the construction or acquisition of new buildings or facilities.

E. Other Submission Requirements

The applicant should follow the submission requirements noted in the document entitled “A Guide for Preparation and Submission of CSREES Applications via Grants.gov.”

PART V – APPLICATION REVIEW REQUIREMENTS

A. General

All Regional Aquaculture Centers research and extension aquaculture project proposals and POW will be reviewed by the CSREES National Aquaculture Program staff for relevancy, scientific merit, research rationale and methodology, suitability of budget requests and justifications, performance reports, submission of required documentation, and relevance to the USDA Aquaculture Program and CSREES' mission. Centers are required to submit annual accomplishment reports to CSREES. Reports should include a description of progress in meeting stated regional goals and objectives, an analysis of program strengths and opportunities in meeting priorities in the National Aquaculture Development Plan, and steps to be taken, if any, to strengthen program planning and execution.

PART VI –AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. General

Administrative grant: The initial CSREES-approved funding request will obligate the entire amount and release those costs related to and allowed for the administration of the Regional Aquaculture Centers Program. Remaining funds will be withheld pending submission of a POW.

Plans of Work: An annual POW must be submitted to CSREES National Aquaculture Program staff outlining information relative to individual projects and should include: Title; Project Duration; Funding Requested by Subcontracting Institution; Funding Requested by Individual Grant Number; Program Development Process; Executive Summary; Project Work Group; Background and Project Justification; Related Current and Previous Work; Project Goals and Specific Objectives; Work Statement and Procedures; Timetable; Facilities by Institution; Extension and Outreach Components; Literature Cited; Budget Pages by Institution; Budget Narrative by Institution; One-page Vitas of Participating Collaborators; and the Role of Participating Collaborators.

All additional information and forms required in the initial grant application relative to subcontracts made to fund regional Plans of Work are required to be submitted to and retained by the host institution.

B. Expected Program Outputs and Reporting Requirements

Grantees are required to submit initial project information and annual and summary reports to CSREES' Current Research Information System (CRIS). The CRIS database contains narrative project information, progress/impact statements, and final technical reports that are made available to the public. For applications recommended for funding, instructions on preparing and submitting of project documentation will be provided to the applicant by the agency contact. Documentation must be submitted to CRIS before CSREES funds will be released. Project reports will be requested by the CRIS office when required. For more information about CRIS, visit <http://cris.csrees.usda.gov>.

PART VII – AGENCY CONTACT

Applicants and other interested parties are encouraged to contact Dr. Meryl Broussard, Director, Animal Section, Plant and Animal Systems, USDA, Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service; Mail Stop 2220, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-2220; telephone: (202) 401-6438; fax: (202) 401-6156; e-mail: mbroussard@csrees.usda.gov.